

GROWING BETTER.

Dr. Talmage Discourses on Nature and Christianity.

The Spread of True Religion Liberty to Make the World Grow Better—Nature's Contribution to Christianity—The Resurrection.

In a late sermon at Brooklyn, Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage took his text from Isaiah lx. 18, "The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary." Following is his sermon:

On our way from Damascus we saw the mountains of Lebanon white with snow, and the places from which the cedars were hewn, and then drawn by ox teams down to the Mediterranean sea, and then floated in great rafts to Joppa, and then again drawn by ox teams up to Jerusalem to build Solomon's temple. Those mighty trees in my text are called the "glory of Lebanon." Inanimate nature felt the effects of the first transgression. When Eve touched the forbidden tree, it seemed as if the sinful contact had smitten not only that tree, but as if the air caught the pollution from the leaves, and as if the sap had carried the virus down into the very soil until the entire earth reeked with the leprosy. Under that sinful touch nature withered. The inanimate creation, as if aware of the damage done it, sent up the thorn and briar and nettle to wound, and fiercely oppose, the human race. Now as the physical earth felt the effects of the first transgression, so it shall also feel the effect of the Saviour's mission. As from that one tree in Paradise a blight went forth through the entire earth, so from one tree on Calvary another force shall speed out to interpenetrate and cheer, subdue and override the evil. In the end it shall be found that the tree of Calvary has more potency than the tree of Paradise.

As the nations are evangelized I think a corresponding change will be effected in the natural world. I verily believe that the trees, and the birds, and the rivers, and the skies will have their millennium. If man's sin affected the ground, and the vegetation, and the atmosphere, shall Christ's work be less powerful or less extensive? Doubtless God will take the irregularly and fiercely from the elements so as to make them congenial to the race, which will then be symmetrical and evangelized. The ground shall not be so lavish of weeds and so grudging of grain. Soils which now have peculiar proclivities toward certain forms of evil production will be delivered from their besetting sins. Steep mountains, plowed down into more gradual ascent, shall be girded with flocks of sheep and herds of corn. The wet marsh shall become the deep grassed meadow. Cattle shall not be harmed by caverns once haunted of wild beasts. Children will build playhouses in what was once a cave of serpents; and, as the Scripture saith: "The weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den."

What harvest shall be reaped when neither drought, nor excessive rain, nor mildew, nor infesting insects shall arrest the growth and the utmost capacity of the fields for production shall be tested by an intelligent and athletic yeomanry. Isaiah in my text seems to look forward to the future condition of the physical earth as a condition of great beauty and excellence, and then prophesies that as the strongest and most ornamental timber in Lebanon was brought down to Jerusalem and constructed into the ancient temple, so all that is beautiful and excellent in the physical earth shall yet contribute to the church now being built in the world. "The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee; the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together to beautify the place of my sanctuary."

Much of this prophecy has already been fulfilled, and I proceed to some practical remarks upon the contributions which the natural world is making to the Kingdom of God, and then draw some inferences. The first contribution that nature gives to the church is her testimony in behalf of the truth of Christianity. This is an age of profound research. Nature cannot evade men's inquiries as once. In chemist's laboratory she is put to torture and compelled to give up her mysteries.

This research will have powerful effect upon the religious world. They must either advance or arrest Christianity, make men better or make them worse, be the church's honor or the church's overthrow. Christians, aware of this in the early ages of discovery, were nervous and fearful as to the progress of science.

Some of the followers of Aristotle, after the invention of the telescope, refused to look through the instrument, lest what they saw would overthrow the teachings of that great philosopher. But the Christian religion has no such apprehension now. Bring on your telescopes and microscopes and spectroscopes—and the more the better. The God of nature is the God of the Bible, and in all the universe, and in all the eternities. He has never once contradicted Himself. Christian merchants and professors instruct the children of Christian communities. The warmest and most enthusiastic friends of Christ are the bravest and most enthusiastic friends of science.

Scientific discussions may be divided into those which are concluded, and those which are still in progress, depending for decision upon future investigation. Those which are concluded have invariably rendered their verdict for Christianity, and we have faith to believe that those which are still in prosecution will come to as favorable a conclusion. The great systems of error are falling before these discoveries, which have only demonstrated the truth of the Bible, and so reinforced Christianity. Mohammedanism and paganism in their ten thousand forms have been proven false, and by great natural laws shown to be impostors. Buried cities have been exhumed, and

the truth of God found written on their coffin lids.

Men who have gone to Palestine infidels have come back Christians. They who were blind and deaf to the truth at home have seemed to see Christ again preaching upon Olivet and have beheld in vivid imagination the Son of God again walking the hills about Jerusalem. Cagliaris once rejected the truth, but afterward said: "I came to Egypt and the Scriptures and the pyramids converted me." When I was in Beirut, Syria, last December our beloved American missionary, Rev. Dr. Jessup, told me of his friend who met a sceptic at Joppa, the seaport of Jerusalem, and the unbeliever said to his friend: "I am going into the Holy Land to show up the folly of the Christian religion. I am going to visit all the so-called 'sacred places' and write them up and show the world that the New Testament is an imposition upon the world's credulity." Months after Dr. Jessup's friend met the sceptic at Beirut, after he had completed his journey through the Holy Land. "Well, how is it?" said the aforesaid gentleman to the sceptic. The answer was: "I have seen it all and I tell you the Bible is true! Yes, it is all true!" The man who went to destroy came back to defend. After what I myself saw during my recent absence, I conclude that any one who can go through the Holy Land and remain an unbeliever is either a bad man or an imbecile.

Again, nature offers an invaluable contribution to Christianity by the illustration she makes of divine truth. The inspired writers seized upon the advantages offered by the natural world. Trees and rivers and clouds and rocks broke forth into holy and enthusiastic utterances. Would Christ set forth the strength of faith, He points to the sycamore, whose roots spread out and strike down and clinch themselves amid great depth of earth, and he said that faith was strong enough to tear that up by the roots.

At Hawarden, Eng., Mr. Gladstone, while showing me his trees, during a prolonged walk through his magnificent park, pointed out a sycamore and, with a wave of his hand, said: "In your visit to the Holy Land, did you see any sycamore more impressive than that?" I confessed that I had not. His branches were not more remarkable than its roots. It was to such a tree as that Jesus pointed when He would illustrate the power of faith: "Ye might say unto this sycamore tree, 'Be thou plucked up by the roots and be thou cast into the sea,' and it would obey you."

Christ would have the Christian, dependent over his slowness of religious development, go to his cornfield for a lesson. He watches first the green shoot pressing up through the clods, gradually strengthening into a stalk, and last of all the husk swelling out with the pressure of the corn: "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."

Would David set forth the freshness and beauty of genuine Christian character, he sees an eagle starting from its nest just after the moulting season, its old feathers shed, and its wings and breast decked with new down and plumes, its body as finely feathered as that of her young ones just beginning to try the speed of their wings. Thus rejuvenated and replumed is the Christian's faith and hope by every season of communion with God. "Thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." Would Solomon represent the annoyance of a contentious woman's tongue, he points to a leakage in the top of his house or tent, where, throughout the stormy day, the water comes through, falling upon the floor—drip! drip! drip! and he says: "A continual dripping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike." Would Christ set forth the character of those who make great professions of piety, but have no fruit, He compares them to barren fig trees, which have very large and showy leaves, and nothing but leaves. Would Job illustrate deceitful friendships, he speaks of brooks in these climes, that wind about in different directions, and dry up when you want to drink out of them: "My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook, and as the stream of brooks they pass away." David when he would impress us with the despondency into which he had sunk, compares it to a quagmire of those regions, through which he had doubtless sometimes tried to walk, but sunk in up to his neck, and he cried: "I sunk in deep mire where there is no standing." Would Habakkuk set forth the capacity which God gives the good man to walk safely amid the wildest perils, he points to the wild animal called the hind walking over slippery rocks, and leaping from wild crag to wild crag, by the peculiar make of its hoofs able calmly to sustain itself in the most dangerous places: "The Lord God is my strength, and He will make my feet like the hind's feet."

Job makes all natural objects pay tribute to the royalty of his book. As you go through some chapters of Job you feel as if it were a bright spring morning, and, as you see the glittering drops from the grass under your feet you say with that patriarch: "Who hath begotten the drops of the dew?" And now, as you read on, you seem in the silent midnight to behold the waving of a great light upon your path, and you look up to find it the aurora borealis, which Job described so long ago as "the bright light in the clouds and the splendor that cometh out of the north." As you read on there is darkness hurling in the heavens, and the showers break loose till the birds fly for hiding place and the mountain torrents in red fury foam over the rocky shelving; and with the same poet you exclaim: "Who can number the clouds in wisdom, or who can stay the bottles of heaven?" As you read on you feel yourself coming in frosty climes, and, in fancy, wading through the snow, you say, with that same inspired writer: "Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?" And while the sharp sleet drives in your face, and the hail stings your cheek, you quote Him again: "Hast thou seen the treasures of the hail?" In the Psalmist's writings I heard the voice of the sea: "Deep calleth unto deep," and the roar of the forests: "The Lord shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh," and the loud peal of the black tempest: "The

God of glory thundereth," and the rustle of the long silk on the well-filled husks: "The valleys are covered with corn," and the cry of the wild beast: "The young lions roar after their prey," the hum of the palm-trees and cedars: "The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon," the sigh of wings and the swirl of fens: "Dominion over the fowls of the air and the fishes of the sea."

The truths of the Gospel might have been presented in technical terms and by the means of dry definitions, but under these the world would not have listened or felt. How could the safety of trusting upon Christ be presented were it not for the figure of a rock? How could the gladdening effect of the Gospel have been set forth had not Zacharias thought of the dawn of morning, exclaiming: "The day spring from on high visited us to give light to them that sit in the darkness." How could the soul's intense longing for Christ have been presented so well as by the emblem of natural hunger and natural thirst? As the lake gathers into its bosom the shadows of hills around and the gleam of stars above, so, in these great depths of divine truth, all objects in nature are grandly reflected. We walk forth in the spring time and every thing breathes of the resurrection. Bright blossom and springing grass speak to us of the coming up of those whom we have loved, when in the white robes of their joy and coronation they shall appear. And when in the autumn of the year nature preaches thousands of funeral sermons from the text "We all do fade as a leaf," and scatters her elegies in our path, we can not help but think of sickness and the tomb. Even winter, "being dead, yet speaketh."

Another contribution which the natural world is making to the kingdom of Christ, is the defense and aid which the elements are compelled to give to the Christian personally. There is no law of nature but is sworn for the Christian's defense. In Job this thought is presented as a bargain made between the inanimate creation and the righteous man: "Thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field." What a grand thought that the lightnings, and the tempests, and the hail, and the frosts, which are the enemies of unrighteousness, are all marshalled as the Christian's body-guard. They fight for him. They strike with an arm of fire, or clutch with their fingers of ice. Everlasting peace is declared between the fiercest elements of nature and the good man. They may in their fury seem to be indiscriminate, smiting down the righteous with the wicked, yet they can not damage the Christian's soul, although they may shrivel his body.

Now I infer from this that the study of natural objects will increase our religious knowledge. If David and Job and John and Paul could not afford to let go without observation one passing cloud or rift of snow or spring blossom you can not afford to let them go without study. Men and women of God most eminent in all ages for faith and zeal indulged in such observations—Payson and Baxter and Doddridge and Hannah More. That man is not worthy the name of Christian who saunters listlessly among these magnificent disclosures of the divine power around, beneath and above us, stupid and un instructed. They are not worthy to live in a desert, for that has its fountains and palm trees; nor in regions of everlasting ice, for even there the stars kindle their lights and auroras flash and huge icebergs shiver in the morning light and God's power sits upon them as upon a great white throne. Yet there are Christians in the church who look upon all such tendencies of heart and mind as soft sentimentalities, and because they believed this printed revelation of God are content to be infidels in regard to all that has been written in this great book of the universe, written in letters of stars, in paragraphs of constellations, and illustrated with sunset and thundercloud and spring morning.

I, infer, also, the transcendent importance of Christ's religion. Nothing is so far down, and nothing is so high up, and nothing so far out, but God makes it pay tax to the Christian religion. If snow and tempest and dragon are expected to praise God, suppose you He expects no homage from your soul? Where God has written His truth upon every thing around, suppose you He did not mean you to open your eyes and read it?

Finally, I learn from this subject what an honorable position the Christian occupies when nothing is so great and glorious in nature but it is made to edify, defend and instruct him. Hold up your heads, sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, that I may see how you bear your honors. Though now you may think yourself unbefriended, this spring's soft wind, the next summer's harvest of barley, and next autumn's glowing fruits, and next winter's storms, all seasons all elements, zephyr and euroclydon, rose's breath and thundercloud, gleaming light and thick darkness, are sworn to defend you and cohorts of angels would fly to deliver you from peril, and the great God would unsheathe His sword and arm the universe in your cause rather than harm should touch you with one of its lightest fingers. "As the mountains around about Jerusalem, so the Lord is around about His people, from this time forth for evermore."

Oh, for more sympathy with the natural world, and then we should always have a Bible open before us, and we could take a lesson from the most forcing circumstances, as when a storm came down upon England Charles Wesley sat in a room watching it through an open window, and frightened by the lightning and thunder a little bird flew in and nestled in the bosom of the sacred poet, and as he gently stroked it and felt the wild beating of its heart, he turned to his desk and wrote that hymn which will be sung while the world lasts:

Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly,
While the billows near me roll,
While the tempest still is high;
Hide me, O, my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life be past,
Safe into the haven guide,
O, receive my soul at last.

"PETER WILKINS."

An Old-Time Novel with Well-Known Features.

Among the Flying Folks—Devices Which Have Been Freely Used by Writers of the Haggard School of Fiction.

How many of the novel readers of to-day know any thing about "Peter Wilkins?" Yet it is in all probability a fact that ninety per cent. of these same novel readers has enjoyed many of the very devices of fiction which were original in "Peter Wilkins," and which have been used by Rider Haggard, Edgar Allan Poe, the anonymous authors of "Under the Auroras" and "The Strange Manuscript Found in a Copper Cylinder," and some half dozen other less known writers and books.

"Peter Wilkins" was written somewhere about the year 1750, says the San Francisco Chronicle, and was published almost anonymously, the only clue to the identity of the writer being the signature "R. P." to the dedication. This dedication, by the way, was to Elizabeth, Countess of Northumberland, that same patron to whom Percy dedicated his "Reliques" and Goldsmith the first printed copy of his "Edwin and Angelina."

The title-page of the book set forth that it contained the life and adventures of Peter Wilkins, a Cornishman, "Relating particularly His Shipwreck near the South Pole, his wonderful Passage thro' a subterraneous Cavern into a kind of New World; his there meeting with a Gawry or flying woman, whose life he preserved and afterwards married her; his extraordinary conveyance to the country of Glums and Gawrys or Men and Women that fly. Likewise a Description of this strange Country, with the Laws, Customs and Manners of its Inhabitants, and the Author's remarkable Transactions among them."

The book was published in two small volumes and was illustrated with several quaint "Cuts, clearly and distinctly representing the structure and Mechanism of the Wings of the Glums and Gawrys, and the Manner in which they use them, either to swim or fly."

It was not until 1835 that the name of the author was found out, and then it was by accident and not as the result of any inquiry. In the year mentioned a London printer named Nicol sold a number of books and manuscripts in his possession which had once belonged to Dodsley, the publisher, and when these were being catalogued the original agreement for the sale of the manuscript was brought to light. From this document it appeared that the author was called Robert Paltock, or Poltock, and that he received for the copyright twenty pounds sterling, twelve copies of the book and proof impressions of the illustrations. This, the probability (from his name) that the writer, like his hero, was of Cornish origin, and the supposition that the Robert Paltock buried at Byme Church, Dorsetshire, in 1767, was the same man is absolutely all that is known of the author of this ingenious romance. With the literary men of his day he seems to have had no intercourse, and not a single mention of him is to be found among his contemporaries. As the result of a diligent inquiry, A. H. Bullen states that so far as he could find, the Monthly Review was the only journal in which the book was noticed, and in that it was dismissed as "a very strange performance indeed." That Paltock should have chosen Clement's Inn as a place of residence, says Mr. Bullen, is not surprising. It still keeps something of its pristine repose; the sundial is still supported by the negro spoken of by Charles Lamb; the grass has not lost its verdure, and on August evenings the plane-trees' leaves glint golden in the sun as they did at the time of Coleridge.

One may still hear the chimes at midnight as Falstaff and Justice Shallow heard them of old. Here, where only a muffled murmur comes from the workaday world, a man in the last century might have dreamed away his life, lonely as Peter Wilkins himself. One can imagine the amiable recluse composing his homely romance amid such surroundings. Perhaps it was the one labor of his life. He may have come to the inn originally with the aspiration of making fame and money; and then the spirit of cloistered calm turned him from such vulgar paths, and instead of losing his fine feelings and swelling the ranks of the plutocrats, he gave us a charming romance for our bedside.

Slighted though the book was at the time of its appearance it found lovers here and there and was not forgotten. A new edition appeared in 1783 and again in the following year. It was included in the edition of "Popular Romances" in 1813 and published separately,

with some charming plates by Stothard in 1816. In 1763 a French translation appeared under the title of "Les Hommes Volants, ou Les Aventures de Pierre Wilkins," and in 1767 a German translation was published having for title "Die fliegenden Menschen, oder Munderbare Bege benheiten Peter Wilkins." Coleridge admired the book, calling it a work of uncommon beauty. Southey called Paltock's winged people "the most beautiful creatures of imagination that ever were devised."

Sir Walter Scott entertained a warning for the work; the story was a favorite with Charles Lamb; and Leigh Hunt seemed never to tire of discoursing about its beauties. Notwithstanding all this, the book is almost unknown in this country, and a recent "History of Fiction," published in New York, does not even mention it. It is

only within the past few weeks that it has appeared on the shelves of a local library and, as was said at the commencement, our novel readers know it not. But the book has been known to novel writers, as was also just now said, and as will be now shown.

After a number of minor adventures Peter Wilkins, who had been obliged to ship from England as a common sailor, is wrecked upon a rock down within the Antarctic circle, against which rock the vessel had been drawn by an irresistible current. Leaving the vessel in a boat, he starts to skirt the rock, when he is sucked under it, and down a cavern, and over a waterfall, and through a horror of blackness, and then out into the light and a lovely lake, bordered with woods and meadow land. Here Peter lives a sort of Robinson Crusoe life until he is joined by a flying woman, who had been injured in a fight over the place. She is a charming companion, and they are married and live happily together beside the little lake.

After some years Youwarkee, the wife, decides to visit her father, and finds when she does so that the appearance of her husband was the subject of an old prophecy, its further burden being that he should deliver the kingdom, of which Youwarkee is a subject, from the attacks of a revolting chieftain. Accordingly Peter Wilkins is sent for and carried to the threatened kingdom, which he, of course, saves, the chief engines of defense being firearms procured from the ship. He finds the flying people peaceful and gentle folks, not given to cruel idolatrous customs, and that they live in cities hollowed out of rocks and can not bear the sunlight. Their rock-hewn homes are lit with glow-worms enclosed in crystal globes set in the ceiling, while some of the homes, notably the King's palace, are magnificent constructions of mammoth proportions and carved into a bewildering succession of chambers, pillars, balls, alcoves, etc. Among this people Wilkins lives until he becomes an old man, teaching the Glums and Gawrys his own religion, and learning from them much that is valuable and strange.

Many of these, the chief points of the story, have doubtless already been recognized by the reader as old friends. The chasm through the mountains has become accepted by a dozen authors as the recognized means of communication between the known and the unknown worlds. Haggard uses it in "Allan Quatermain," and so does Poe in his "Strange Narrative of J. Gordon Pym." This latter, by the by, is a record of what was seen and done within the Antarctic circle and so presents another point of resemblance. In "Under the Auroras," said to be written by an American author, playwright and journalist, the Totius live in houses and palaces cut out of the solid cliff, many of the halls being "grand in dimensions and magnificent beyond description," and all lit by some hidden source of illumination. Instead of the elastic "grau-dee" or wings of the flying people, the



THE GAWRY, OR FLYING-WOMAN, WITH WINGS EXTENDED.

Totius are covered with a thin dress of silken floss, and in "Under the Auroras" as in "Peter Wilkins," one of the most stirring incidents is the subjugation of a rebellious race by the visitor from without, aided by fire-arms.

But the most remarkable claim of similarities is that which runs through "The Strange MS. Found in a Copper Cylinder." The theater of action is within the regions of the South Pole, and access to it is gained by a cavern which runs through the rocky barrier lying between what has been discovered and what is only dreamed of. Through this cavern the narrator is swept by a torrent which runs along an "unparalleled abyss" and is the "very blackness of blackness," and out into a new world with green fields and groves. The race that he finds himself amid lives in rock-hewn cities, wherein are splendid far-reaching halls lit in some peculiar way from the roof. Then, too, this race can not fly the light, and while it does not fly it keeps trained flying monsters as animals of locomotion.

But it is not as the treasure-house of ideas which other writers have diligently sought out that "Peter Wilkins" is alone valuable. It is a charming book to read in the cozy comfort of arm-chair, lamp, fire and slippers. Without any great literary pretension, amusing sometimes because of its absolute simplicity, it is nevertheless a romance whose originality, wholesome morality and the beauty of its principal characters warrant it a place among the standard volumes of our language.

A second offering: "Where is your brother, Dick?" "He has gone to the Sandwich Islands, and he hadn't been there three days when they gave him a great office." "What office did they give him?" "Secretary to the King!" "Better than that. They gave him a duking."—Aecolia Record.

Secondly William: First Boy—Do you think your folks will be willing to have your sister marry Mr. Combeforth, Johnny? Second Boy—Oh, yes; I know they will. It keeps old Tige tied up every night now.—Time.

MISCELLANEOUS.

—There is a township in Sumner county, Kan., in which a crime against the laws of the State has not been recorded in sixteen years.

—There is a cat in Millville, N. J., that for sixteen years has lived around the docks, and that will jump overboard and swim like a water spaniel.

—There is an admirable arrangement for quickly and safely emptying the house in use in the Tremont Theater, Boston. By simply touching a button in any one of eight handy places in the theatre, seven exits open, actuated by electricity.

—The food of a "Zoo" hippopotamus is estimated to be about two hundred pounds a day in weight, and consists chiefly of hay, grass and roots. The daily provender of a giraffe weighs about fifty pounds. The lions and tigers obtain eight or nine pounds a day.

—One of the curiosities of Washington, the new State, is Medical Lake, not far from Spokane Falls. A property of its water is that it forms a lather whenever it is agitated violently or rubbed quickly on the hands or the surface of the body. No fish or other living thing has been found in these waters, and the lake itself is rather repulsive and muddy in appearance.

—England obtains a certain proportion of its supplies of ivory from Asia, but the bulk and the best comes from Africa. Indeed a great part of what is nominally East Indian is really African, for it is sent from Zanzibar and Mozambique to Bombay, and such parts are not required for bangles and carved work are shipped to England.

A metal that will melt at such a low temperature as 150 degrees is certainly a curiosity, but a Syracuse (N. Y.) man has succeeded in producing it. It is an alloy composed of lead, tin, bismuth and cadmium, and in weight, hardness and color resembles type-metal. So easily does it melt that if you place it on a comparatively cool part of the stove with a piece of paper under it it will melt without the paper being scorched.

—A foreign exchange gives the following bit of milling history in this country: "Much of the flour made in Ohio before 1840 was sent West. In 1830 Oliver Newberry purchased 500 barrels at \$8 a barrel, and took it to Chicago, then a struggling frontier village, and sold it at \$20 per barrel, citizens holding a public meeting and thanking him for not asking \$50. It was all the flour the people of Chicago had for the winter."

—There is a man living in Salt Lake City, one of the old settlers, who when quite young married an Indian woman. Years went by, and he amassed a large fortune and lived in an elegant house, surrounded by every luxury. One day an acquaintance, who had imbibed something of the morals of the place, said to him: "Why don't you get a young and pretty wife, who will suit your beautiful home? You might give that old squaw enough to live upon in a quiet way. As it is, she's a perfect millstone about your neck." With blazing eyes he turned upon him, saying: "That 'old squaw,' as you call her, helped to make every cent of money I have today, and so long as we live we share our fortune together."—Woman's Journal.

FEAST FOR A SOUL.

The Beauty of Champlain When Its Discoverer First Looked Upon It.

It was the 3d of July, 1609, when Champlain first gazed upon the lake which subsequently bore his name, and which to-day is the sole monument that perpetuates his fame. We do not know certainly the exact hour, but it was early in the morning when the canoe which bore him glided out from between the overhanging maples and cedars which lined either bank of the Richelieu, and entered the broader waters of the lake, writes W. H. Murray in "Lake Champlain and Its Shores." The spectacle which met his eyes was one which brought exclamations of astonishment from his mouth, and as his canoe swept onward over the level water, new beauties and wider expanses of natural loveliness broke upon his view. Even then he was a world-wide traveler. He had visited Mexico, Vera Cruz and Panama. The luxuriant loveliness of the tropics and the more sober beauties of semi-tropical regions were familiar to him. He had seen the best that the continent of Europe had to show. He had gazed upon the green meadows of Aedonia and the awful grandeur of the Saguenay. But never before had he looked upon a scene of such picturesque beauty and such varied loveliness as this body of water presented to his appreciative eyes as it lay revealed in the dewy light of this warm July morning.

Not a breath was moving in the air. The lake, between its widening shores, stretched before him smooth as glass. Through it the noiseless paddles moved the noiseless bark in which he stood and gazed. Behind him came the twenty-four canoes, silently following his silent wake. The paddles rose and sunk in perfect unison. The oared faces of the Indians and their feathered scalplocks showed brilliantly in the morning light. The air was odorous with the perfumes of gums and flowers. Here and there lilies starred the water whitely. Large fish leaped, splashed, and drove their sharpened wedge of motion along the level surface. Through the dewy air came the pure, sweet note of the hermit thrush. Far overhead the hunting eagle, sweeping around and around in watchful circles, came to a sudden stop, fluttered for a moment, and then, with rightly balanced poise, drove headlong downward into the lake. Ducks blackened the water for acres. The mother does watched the playful fawns bounding along the sand. The lumbering moose waded laboriously shoreward, and on the marshy bank stood at gaze. Above, the sky was sapphire. Over the eastern mountains the sun shone redly. The mighty woods came to the water's edge, an unbroken mass of natural forest. The lake, to which he was to give his name while living, that was to be his everlasting monument when dead, welcomed his entrance between her shores with the finest expressions of her loveliness. Champlain had come to his own, and his own received him gladly.